

MUSIC AND PLAYS

Canadian World Musicians.

IN the matter of famous Canadian musicians abroad, what's the matter with New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island—and Saskatchewan? Let us see. British Columbia gave the world and the Boston Opera Co. Edvina, who was equally successful as Louise and Tosca; Calgary sent out Kathleen Parlow, famous violinist pupil of Auer, whose renderings are now famous in many a record. Portage La Prairie gave origin to Edith Miller, mezzo-soprano, who is now with the Chicago Opera Company; and Winnipeg was the first musical arena for Redfern Hollinshead, the greatest lyric tenor Canada has ever produced—although he was born in England and has spent the main part of his musical career in Toronto. Guelph, Ont., gave us Eddie Johnson, who came from New York once as tenor soloist for the Mendelssohn Choir, afterwards startled Broadway with his high B flat and afterwards broke into Italian opera by marrying a countess in Milan. Eddie used to be a Sunday School choir boy in old Norfolk St. Methodist Church, Guelph. Toronto gave us Ernest Seitz, celebrated master pupil of Lhevinne and formerly of Vogt; Elizabeth Campbell, stage contralto, born in some little town like Whitby and afterwards with the Century Opera Company in New York; Bertha Crawford, now in England; and half a dozen others. Ottawa turned out Yane Lavoie-Herz, pianiste and pupil of Scriabine; Eva Gauthier, famous soprano and protegee of Sir Wilfrid Laurier. Montreal gave Edmond Burke, operatic baritone and colleague of Melba; Donald, light soprano and musical ward of Lord Strathcona—with many more. Chambly, P.Q., furnished the immortal Albani, of whom it is needless to write more than of Lind or Patti. Some small town in Nova Scotia produced Evelyn Starr, violiniste, in her last season, pupil of Auer.

These are random selections from the Canadian roll of honour in music as recorded more or less in the world's temple of fame. But so far as memory serves us New Brunswick, P. E. I., and Saskatchewan have no contributions to just that class of music-makers. If we are wrong we are open to correction. In fact we hope we are.

The Stage's Tallest Woman.

YOU may never have heard of Jobyna Howland, actress, prototype of the original Gibson girl, the very first woman that Charles Dana Gibson drew in all his long series of "supercilious beauties" as they are called by Ada Patterson in *The Theatre* for September. No, the name was never that of a famous actress, though for years Jobyna Howland took tall beauty roles in light American comedies. But if you were asked to recognize the stage version of the recent Mrs. Arthur Stringer, wife of the Canadian story-writer and poet, you would believe the picture on this page to be a good photograph of the tallest woman on the stage to-day.

It is a good many years now since Jobyna Howland began to live with her husband six months every summer in the Kent Co. cottage on the shore of Lake Erie. There she learned to can raspberries and other domestic matters, learned what the farmers were doing when they cut wheat, and as soon as it came the season of Tosti's Good-Bye went back to New York to do tall-beauty and short singing parts—

But that's all part of another story. The present feature of interest is the very interesting interview with Jobyna Howland in the last issue of *The Theatre*, in which Ada Patterson says that reduced to simplest terms, Miss Howland's quarrel with the drama is "I'm six feet tall and I can't get a lover."

"Seems to me I've heard—" I began murmuring. "It will not do to have a stage lover of your own height."

She ignored the implication. "He must be taller. Given a man and woman of the same height and the woman looks much taller. I should be made love to by a man of six feet three or four inches. Where can you find him?"

"James K. Hackett?"

"I was his leading woman."

"Stanley Dark?"

"He was my fiance in the play, 'Our-selves.'"

"Lou-Tellegen?"

"I would make him look little. It's as bad on the screen as on the stage. A woman can lean down to the love maker. She can relax her hip and can drop her shoulder. It helps the love scene, but makes her look awkward and gives her a reputation for being clumsy. 'Playing down' to someone is the opposite of graceful. On the stage that is nearly fatal."



Actress Jobyna Howland is so tall—six feet exactly—that she never can find a stage lover tall enough to look the part.

There's another reason why it is genuinely unfortunate to be a tall actress. Height is a challenge. It is a command. 'Look at me and only me' it says. While a player is youthful and crude this is a detriment. People will look at her wherever she stands, if it be in the back row of the chorus, and they will note the imperfections due to inexperience. So she creates a bad first impression.

"Her height causes her to dwarf other persons on the stage, to make them seem insignificant. This annoys them. Annoyance becomes anger. Anger becomes protest. She is never welcomed into a company. Once in, the others of the company want her out of it. Some of the members of the company don't scruple to request that she leave. Their plea to the manager has some logic. They say she is disproportionate, that the combination of her height and the brevity of others is inartistic."

"There is a very practical handicap for a tall actress. It is an argument before which I am dumb."

Miss Howland, disconsolate, defiant, threw down the gauntlet. "Name a very tall actress who is successful."

I named six. "None as tall as I am," she insisted. "None six feet. No. She gives the critics no chance to be original. If they want to say something pleasant about her they say: 'She is a statuesque beauty.' That doesn't help her reputation as an actress. 'Statuesque' implies

that she has the static quality. An actress must be dynamic. A woman may be statuesque but get no farther than the show girl stage. What has become of the tall show girl? She is no more. Nobody will have her."

Why Not a Canadian Orchestra This Year?

THE Mendelssohn Choir management have decided to give concerts this season, but without an accompanying orchestra. The works will therefore be largely unaccompanied; a class of work that led to the original formation of the choir and made it famous before the employment of any assisting orchestra. This was done season before last, and while the works so given were magnificent examples of that kind of music, many of the Choir's patrons sadly missed the orchestra. We repeat now what we said then—that if Dr. Vogt wants to do it he can assemble a first-class symphony orchestra right in Toronto capable of giving one big patriotic work such as Elgar's *Caratacus*. In the production of a work of this kind under present unusual conditions the entire professional talent of Toronto would rally to the call—at least so we think. The opportunity is too big to be missed.

Meanwhile plans are being considered for work on a comprehensive "Victory Festival" to be given as soon as possible after the conclusion of peace, in which a British night, followed by three evenings made up of programmes of French, Russian, and Italian works are contemplated, preliminary rehearsals for which will begin during the present winter in conjunction with the a cappella concerts of this year.

Musical Hamilton.

HAMILTON is evidently to have a busy season. In noticing the activities planned thus far one naturally recurs to the efforts of certain musicians who have passed away, such as D. J. O'Brien, Thomas Littlehales, and R. S. Ambrose, and those who are still living, Dr. C. L. M. Harris, George Robinson, the veteran bandmaster, and J. E. P. Aldous. Hamilton has produced a number of popular artists like Mrs. Caldwell, Mrs. Frank Mackelcan, the late George Fox, and many others. It also has at the present time a number of artists whose names are becoming household words in the Province.

The Centenary Choir will give their annual concert in December and will likely repeat Mendelssohn's Hymn of Praise. During the fourteen years Mr. W. H. Hewlett has been at Centenary they have given Mendelssohn's *Elijah*, St. Paul and the Hymn of Praise, Spohr's *Last Judgment*, Haydn's *Passion Music*, Cherubini's *Requiem*, Liszt's 13th Psalm, Sullivan's *Prodigal Son*, Gounod's *Messe Solennele* and *Troisième Messe Solennele*, Tertius Noble's *Gloria Domine*, and other shorter works.

The Hamilton Symphony Orchestra will continue their practices. This organization is a continuation of the activity in orchestral music inaugurated by Dr. C. L. M. Harris and J. E. P. Aldous, and continued by W. H. Hewlett and F. J. Domville, the present conductor, who is an enthusiastic amateur. The Ladies' Orchestra, an excellent organization under the leadership of Miss Jean Hunter is also being organized for the season's work.

As an educational centre Hamilton has become very important. The Conservatory of Music (under the musical leadership of Bruce A. Carey, J. E. P. Aldous and W. H. Hewlett) is thriving. Last season it had over 700 students. Then there is the Forsyth Academy of Music under the directorship of Miss Langrill. (Concluded on page 23.)

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